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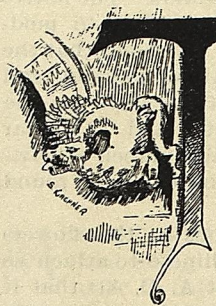
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

CARPET PATTERNS.

BY JAMES CARRUTHERS.



THE composition of attractive ornamental forms, the distribution of these so as to secure a balance of parts, the arrangement of colors and tints in harmonious masses, with breadth of effect and an aspect of repose are the requirements for carrying out artistic carpet designs. In choosing his ornament the designer conventionalises natural forms collating and modifying certain characteristics of these and adapting them to the material, or resorts to Oriental patterns which supply a never failing source of inspiration or indulges in ideal renderings often too subtle in quality to be traced to their source. It may be affirmed generally that grace and simplicity more than elaboration are required in carpet designs and that the best artistic power is displayed in producing light and cheerful expression.

Modern chromatic chemical research has placed at the service of the designer a multiplicity of tints and half tints formerly unknown. The use of half tints obtained from different admixtures of the primaries tempered with light and shade, productive

tones in half tints, these representing the diminishment of light, have necessarily a more restful appearance than strong and vivid colors as more readily admitting of harmonious blendings. When in the interlacing of colors the primaries are moderately employed they have only the general effect of the secondary colors. Some positive color effect is essential for every good carpet pattern. As faded colors suggest poverty, appearing to have faded from their original hue, colors for the best effects should be such as appear to hold their own. Among such substantial colors are rich crimsons, dark blues, dull Pompeian reds and generally the dull tones of primaries and secondaries. The broken colors so extensively used assure not only a reposeful aspect but variety. A broken red becomes maroon; a broken orange, orange russet; a broken yellow, citron; and blue and slate a lavender. As to the tertiaries, russet and olive compose and unite in dark purple, citrine and olive in dark green, russet and citrine in dark orange, the tertiaries having the same order of relation to black that the primaries have to white. Where parts of a design are similar in form alterations in the coloring, causing one in this respect to differ from another, will frequently, when well managed, form an element of beauty. Some of the most subtle and pleasingly changeable effects are obtained by causing one color to overlap another, and also in gradation of tints. The skillful designer invariably avoids crowded effects as inducing an aspect of heaviness. Where stems, leaves and flowers are introduced an amplitude of plain ground in the interspacing suggests the movement of air and light. Variety is increased by giving certain



FLOWER SCROLL, DESIGNED BY E. BROPHY FOR JEFFREY & CO.

of the most charming effect is now better understood than ever. Whatever the forms entering into carpet designs they are all resolvable into the ellipse, the composite ellipse, curvilinear figures and the circle, these admitting of endless combinations.

Analogy, contrast, variety, delicacy and repetition are the main points to be held in view in design. Analogy concerns harmonious arrangement of forms and colors. Contrast has reference not merely to intense and powerful colors, but the modifications brought about by which one color is enhanced by the subordination of others. The colors contrasted may be either pure primaries or secondaries or tertiaries, harmony depending on the quantity of color or strength of the contrast. As two of the primary colors form a contrast to the third, the same result is secured by compound colors in which the primaries predominate as a tone. When any two of the three primary colors are united in a secondary color they are deprived by neutralism of one half their power. In the free use of compound colors the coloring of a carpet may be sumptuous or possess a subdued richness, without being ostentatious or unduly gaudy. Subdued

portions of the component lines and curves greater intensity of color or greater breadth than the rest, the effect being aided by the symmetrical spacing of particular tints.

As all are aware Eastern carpets are not characterised by any great amount of vivid color effects, bright colors being subdued by the contiguous dull hues introduced. The colors most frequently predominating are yellow inclining towards orange, red broken with orange, broken greens including greens of purplish tint, and brown, to which are added a limited number of mixed tints. Where surfaces are fine and smooth cool colors are invariably adopted.

Turkish carpets are ordinarily designed with a flat boarder of flowers of the natural size, the inner portion consisting of larger forms conventionalized, in some cases even to the extent of obscuring the forms, a fault to be avoided. The colors in addition to the predominating tints that pervade the surface, namely green, red and blue, consist of negative shades of a medium or half tint as to light and dark and shade. These not being pure the general effect is cool. The colors do not cut upon

each other, and are mostly bordered with black. Ordinarily a few orange spots enhance and enliven the effect.

Persian and Syrian carpets display a good adaptation of color ornament to the ground. The geometrical arrangements, which are the sound basis of all Eastern designs, are well defined. The Persian carpets are particularly noticeable for the beauty of their designs, the forms of these displaying elegance and subtlety of line. Notwithstanding an ample use of cool hues, they appear rich and full of color.

Arabian carpets, originally woven after Byzantine types have been debased in style in modern times, losing much in picturesque irregularity and proportionately becoming more formal; they are little more than linear patterns including the borders composed of bands of inscriptions taken from the Koran and Arabian poets. Arabic carpet ornamentation may be thus classed: 1. Borders of interlacing scrolls not unfrequently running in different directions. 2. Circular or rectangular spaces on the central field filled with close spirals or branches springing from one stem, these branches consisting of clustered stalks with flowers and leaves intermingled. 3. Intricate patterns of straight lines forming stars, lozenges and irregular pentagons and heptagons with the spaces filled in with disjointed ornament. 4. Script inscriptions already noted.

The central field of Indian carpets, when treated with leaf and floral forms, is ordinarily so completely filled that the ground left is a mere line or edging. It is only in comparatively few patterns that we have occasion to admire the spacing. There is a larger variety of colors in these designs than in Central Asiatic carpets. Colors are so distributed and each so well balanced with harmonizing and complementary hues that the general effect is rich and agreeable. The hues all tend to a dark middle tint in which white and yellow are sparingly introduced. There is occasionally seen, however, a tendency to foxiness in the patterns owing to the large admission of warm neutrals.

No branch of decorative art displays greater fertility in inventiveness than that of carpet design. Holding, as the carpet does, an important relation to all means of interior embellishment, the growing taste for higher styles of display in the furnishing of apartments, necessitates a correspondence in this most important factor. In glancing at modern productions one cannot but be struck with the advances made as illustrated in an endless succession of novelties.

WHAT was the highest price ever given for any book? We may venture to say that we know of one for which a sum of 250,000 francs (£10,000) was paid by its present owner, the German government. That book is a missal formerly given by Pope Leo X. to King Henry VIII, of England, along with a parchment conferring on that sovereign the right of assuming the title of "Defender of the Faith," borne ever since by English kings. Charles II. made a present of the missal to the ancestor of the famous Duke of Hamilton, whose extensive and valuable library was sold some years ago by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, of London. The book which secured the highest offer was a Hebrew Bible in the possession of the Vatican. In 1512 the Jews of Venice proposed to Pope Julius II. to buy the Bible, and to pay for it its weight in gold. It was so heavy that it required two men to carry it. Indeed, it weighed 325 pounds, thus representing the value of half a million francs (£20,000).

ENAMELED work is striped or otherwise ornamented. The striping should be dead color in drying oil whether it is to be coated with finishing varnish or to lie on the surface of the glazing color. For ornamentation, black is relief to any colored ground; white is the same. As to the choice of colors, light orange goes well with blue, vermilion or carmine with green; vermilion or orange suits the clarets; mixed fawn and drab shades constitute a good lining with a ground of the same, the lining being darker by two or three shades. Indeed, this is true of all colors, a darker shade of any color making a good striping for that color. A lighter color if striped in a broad line with a thin black line on one or both sides will also look very well. Very vivid effects can be obtained by running broad black lines at the side and then splitting the back with a thin white line.

In stencilling or painting a group of flowers an appearance of roundness may be given without departing from the flat treatment. This is effected by so arranging them that the flowers of darker tone are placed upon those flowers or portions of them that appear to be underneath the others, or are shaded by them and also those which are placed on the right or darkest side of the group. This must also be done with the different shades of green for the leaves—those flowers that are on the right or shady side with the dark green, and the light on the light side. The whole of the ties and stems should now be put in.

THE CHRYSANTHEMUM IN CHINESE ART.

THE chrysanthemum has many varieties. It has yellow, white, red, purple or various colored flowers. The native horticulturists have found it comparatively easy to modify its appearance and color. There is an old statement that the Soochow gardeners take it when it is a foot above ground and pluck of the terminal bud at the top. After a few days the one bud originates two. These again are decapitated and a similar result follows, so that when autumn arrives the number of flowers on one stalk is very great, and they grow into a sort of round hemisphere like a cart covering.

It was the early discovery that modifications in the flowers could be produced in this way that led the Chinese to attach so much importance to this flower. It was about A. D. 40 that it became a special garden favorite and was valued by the poets. Tan Yuen Ming, of that time, was very fond of it, and a search specially in his poems has resulted in the fact that he classed it with the pine for endurance. The petals remain in their place after winds and storms, and it was this feature of the flower which he admired. The Chinese represent yellow as the natural color, and they add that white asters after a year or two are apt to turn back to yellow. In some varieties the flowers are deciduous, and in others not so. A pale yellow changes to white after the plant has flowered with unusual luxuriance; and white in the same way, when exhibiting a tendency to variation, becomes red. Such flowers wither on the stem. When the petals are far apart they are apt to fall early, and after the full period of blossoming they gradually drop off. If wind and rain should come and shake them, they fall off together and cover the ground. Such minute observation of a flower as this is an example of the pains taken by the Chinese in the study of nature. The Soochow gardeners mentioned mean of course the gardeners of the great plain of which Soochow is the capital, and Shanghai with Tai-tsang and Kiang-yin are particularly noticed as having a climate or soil, or local skill in horticulture, which greatly favors the variability of the Chinese aster. From the statement made it is probable that there is no part of China where there is more success in cultivating the China aster or more variety in it than in the gardens of these cities. There are coarse and fine varieties. Some chrysanthemums grow to ten feet in length, and some disks are as large as a saucer. Two colors appear on the same flower. These are called coarse varieties. The finer include velvety sorts and those which are cylindrical in shape, or turn to the west, or are indented like wolves' teeth. Those which are most valued in China are flowers which begin with being small and grow larger, and petals which are close set, numerous, and fresh in color.

The chrysanthemum flower is fabled by the Chinese to have the power of conferring immortality. To obtain the result it must be eaten with the fruit of the wutung by the believing. In Szechuan there is in the Confucian temple of the capital of the province an image of the genius of the Chrysanthemum flower in the Han palace, and thus become immortal. Those students who pray to her are successful in the examinations. In a cave of the same city there is a painting drawn upon the wall, of a woman holding a chrysanthemum in her hand. Before her is represented a monkey. She is called "The Lady of the Chrysanthemum," and students who pray to her have remarkable dreams; the intimations conveyed in these dreams are wonderful to relate, sure to come true, say the native accounts. The Chrysanthemum Sinense has probably for two centuries been well-known in Europe. The florets, whether of the ray or the disk, are never blue, but they appear with almost every other possible color. The books say that the Chinese must for long ages have been carefully improving the plant, and that their great richness in development and in variety of properties has risen from the sporadic peculiarity and intermixture with allied species unknown to Europe. This last effect would be caused by insects bringing with them in their visits to the flowers the pollen of neighboring plants.

The remarkable variability of these plants is partly due to an excellent constitution, which allows them to be easily propagated by cuttings. About half of the flower heads should be destroyed to increase the size and beauty of those that remain. Not being delicate some kinds will submit to their stems being pegged down near the surface of the ground, and the beauty of a garden plot is remarkable when the flowers of certain hardy varieties are in this way so restricted as to rise only a few inches from the ground. European gardeners obtain seeds from widely different localities, and aim by mixture to rival the handsomest varieties introduced from China. We must subtract the legendary element generously and recognize a true love of natural beauty in the great attachment which the Chinese have for the peony, the plum flower, and the China aster, which have been all favorites for fourteen hundred years or more. This is one of the main sources of the development of modern Chinese painting, in which these flowers have had as much attention as baskets of fruit among the painters of Holland.